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ABSTRACT

The organization of higher education in Sweden, entrance requirements, and the system for selection of applicants for higher education are summarized, as is the Swedish system of economic study assistance. Numbers of students, terms of admission, and other data are presented concerning the different types of adult education in Sweden (Municipal Adult Schools, state schools for adults, residential adult colleges/folk high schools, and adult education organized by voluntary educational associations). The Swedish plan is designed to widen admission to higher education and provide a second chance to those who have not passed through the ordinary academic type of secondary education. Higher studies are organized partly as educational programs and partly as single courses. (SW)

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SECOND CHANCES FOR ADULTS, THE SWEDISH PLAN

(Summary of a paper presented at the 1980 Conference of IAEA by Sven-Eric Henricson, Swedish National Board of Education)

INTRODUCTION

To understand the Swedish plan for widening the admission to Higher Education and to give a second chance to those who for various reasons have not passed through the ordinary academic type of Secondary Education it is necessary to take into account three circumstances:

I The terms of admission to Higher Education

II The different kinds of Adult Education

III The system of economic study assistance

In the following some main facts about these three parts of the Swedish educational system are given.

I ADMISSION TO HIGHER EDUCATION
(According to Regulations of 1977 and 1979)

1 The organization of higher studies

Higher studies are organized partly as educational programmes, partly as single courses.

General educational programmes correspond to more permanent requirements and are established by the Government. They are governed by centrally adopted plans. The more detailed planning of an educational programme may vary from one place to another, and in other respects too the plans provide generous scope for local decisions concerning the planning of courses of study and other matters.

Local educational programmes are be set up at the universities and other institutions to suit particular local conditions. These programmes are a valuable aid in day-to-day work on the development of higher education.

Individual educational programmes are established locally following applications by individuals. The purpose of these programmes is to cater for special wished concerning conbinations of studies.

Most of the vocationally oriented programmes at present to be found at university level are accomodated within the new organization of studies as general educational programmes. Within the sphere of the faculties of arts and sciences, the range of

general programmes must be adapted in such a way as to make the vocational direction of each programme realistic to the individual student in relation to employment prospects. Moreover, courses from the sphere of the faculties of arts and schiences are to a greater extent included in programmes throughout the entire system of higher education.

Plans for local and individual educational programmes, together with all syllabi, are established locally.

Single courses are to provide among other things for in-service and further training needs that are not catered for by complete programmes. The provision of educational opportunities in the form of single courses throughout the higher education system is particularly important as a prerequisite to recurrent education.

2 Entrance Requirements

2.1 General qualifications (irrespective of the course of studies involved)

2.1.1 The completion of studies in at least a two-year course of study of the upper secondary school

2.1.2 A knowledge of Swedish corresponding to not less than two grades of the social two-year course of study of the upper secondary school

2.1.3 A knowledge of English corresponding to at least two grades of a course of study of the upper secondary school

2.1.4 Persons who are over 25 years of age and have been gainfully employed for at least four years. No formal substantiation for Swedish but the stipulation of a command of English corresponding to at least two grades of upper secondary school

2.2 Special qualifications

Special qualifications over and above the general qualifications may be stipulated for various courses of study. For example, a knowledge of mathematics, physics and chemistry corresponding to three years of upper secondary school is stipulated for admission to university studies in medicine and engineering.

3 Selection of applicants

3.1 Quota grouping

When the number of applicants for a programme or a group of programmes exceeds the number of places available, a selection will have to be made. For this purpose the applicants are divided into 4 groups:

3.1.1 Applicants with 3 years of upper secondary schooling

3.1.2 Applicants with 2 years of upper secondary schooling

3.1.3 Applicants with a special certificate from Residential Adult Colleges ("folk high schools")(see page 9)

3.1.4 Applicants with general qualifications according to section 2.1.4 above and those who do not belong to groups 3.1.1 - 3.1.3.

The number of places available are divided between the 4 quota groups according to the number of qualified applicants in each group.

3.2 Selection within each quota group

Within a quota group the selection is based on a score composed as follows:

3.2.1 Quota groups 1 and 2

The mean of marks given in the leaving certificate from the secondary school plus points for working life experience, according to a special scale (see section 3.3).

For 20 % of the places in groups 1 and 2 the admission should be based on marks only.

3.2.2 Quota group 3

The marks of the special certificate plus points for working life experience.

3.2.3 Points of working life experience plus points on an optional scholastic aptitude test

50 % of the places should be reserved for those applicants who are generally qualified only by 25 years of age and 4 years of working life experience. The other 50 % may be qualified also according to 3.2.1 or 3.2.2.

If two or more applicants have the same score the following rules are applied:

Preference is given to the applicant having applied for the actual programme only or to the applicant having given the actual programme the first rank among alternative programmes. If it is still impossible to separate the applicants lots are drawn among them.

Admission to most of the general educational programmes is decided upon centrally by a special Working Unit in the National Board of Universities and Colleges, admission to other programmes by the local Board of the University or College.

3.3 Principles of marking of working life experience

Points for working life experience are given for

3.3.1 One or more employments

3.3.2 Work in one's own enterprise

3.3.3 Care of one's own children under 10 years age

3.3.4 Work in one's own home taking care of sick, old or handicapped with special needs for care

3.3.5 Military service

Working life experience should cover at least 15 months, at least 9 months of which should be spent at the same job or working place. 0.1 point is given for each month up to a maximum of 2.0 points.

For applicants belonging to quota group 4 (see section 3.1.4) points in the same scale are given only for working life experience above the 4 years up to a maximum of 2.5 points.

4 The scholastic aptitude test

As mentioned in section 3.2.3 applicants belonging to quota group 4 (section 3,1.4) can sit for a scholastic aptitude test. The test is optional and you can decide on your own whether or not the test result should be added to the score of selection by saying so in your application for higher studies.

The test battery consists of 6 subtests:

A Word knowledge
B Numerical reasoning
C Reading comprehension
D Interpretation of diagrams, tables and maps
E General orientation
F Study technique

The test should:

a) correspond to the aims and objectives of Higher Education
b) have no back-wash on the educational system below Higher Education
c) have cheap, rapid and objective marking procedures
d) give as little room as possible for effects of coaching
e) be accepted the testees as meaningsful as a basis for selection to higher studies
f) mot disfavour any group of testees, e. g. in respect of sex or socio-economic status.

All subtests should cover as many areas of content as possible to avoid that any group of testees is disfavoured. Furthermore, the items should cover different cognitive categories and levels. To facilitate the fulfillment of these aims, items and subtests are examined along the following pattern:

Content	Cognitive categories		
	Memory Knowledge	Understanding Insight	Judging Deduction
Technology and science			
Administration and economy			
Social and medi-cal caretaking			
Culture and information			
Education and training			

All in all the test should be as comprehensive as possible. For about half of the items the answers can be found in the texts, diagrams etc, given in the tests.The answers to the other items call for background knowledge.

Two test sessions, organized be the State County Boards of Education, are given every year, one in May and one in October. The testing is free of cost for the testees. Each session takes about 8 hours, half the time of which is covered by instructions and pauses.

After the testing the answer sheets are marked and the raw scores are transformed into a scale from 0.0 to 2.0. The transformed result is sent to the testees, who can then attach it to the application to Higher Education (see above).

II THE ADULT EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

1 Municipal Adult Schools (MAS)

1.1 Municipal Adult Schools were established under an Education Act passed by the Parliament in 1967. From the start in the academic year 1967/68 there has been a rapid development in the organization of courses in the municipalities and in the number of students (see below).

1.2 Number of municipalities organizing courses

Year	Types of courses			
	Compulsory School Courses	Upper Secondary School Courses	Special Vocational Courses	No Courses
1971	149	165	238	21
1974	249	197	269	9
1977	264	230	269	6

1.3 General Terms of Admission to MAS

1.3.1 Compulsory School Courses

Age: 16 years

Other qualifications: Declared qualified to follow the course by the Local Board of Admittance to the Municipal Adult School. This declaration is not only based on marks from earlier formal education. Other activities, like informal courses e g in Voluntary Educational associations should also be taken into account.

1.3.2 Upper Secondary School Courses and Special Vocational Courses

Age: 18 years

Other qualifications: See Compulsory School Courses.

1.4 Number of Students

Year	Number of Students			
	Compulsory School Courses	Upper Secondary School Courses	Special Vocational Courses	Total
1971	80 600	92 320	65 100	238 020
1975	61 160	101 135	52 050	214 345
1977	97 190	163 090	14 180	274 970
1979	103 632	132 939	52 476	276 124

1.4.1 Percentage distribution of students in Municipal Adult Schools according to previous studies, age and sex (1978)

Previous Studies	- 19		20-24		25-34		35-54		55-		Total		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	Tot
Post-secondary Ed	-	-	0,3	0,7	3,0	2,8	1,5	1,2	0,3	0,2	5,1	4,9	5,0
3 or 4 years Upper Secondary Ed	0,1	0,3	5,0	4,8	6,3	3,7	3,3	1,5	0,7	0,3	15,6	10,7	12,6
2 years Upper Secondary Ed	0,4	0,7	3,2	3,2	3,0	1,5	1,4	0,2	0,1	0,0	8,0	5,7	6,6
Former Lower Sec School	-	-	0,2	0,3	1,5	5,2	2,8	7,8	0,4	1,0	5,9	14,5	11,1
9 year Compulsory School	5,1	4,9	8,5	8,8	7,5	8,0	1,1	1,7	0,0	1,0	22,2	23,6	23,0
Residential Adult College	-	-	0,1	0,1	0,3	0,4	0,3	0,6	0,0	0,1	0,8	0,3	1,1
Vocational School	0,6	0,5	2,7	1,4	4,3	2,8	3,0	1,6	0,2	0,1	11,8	7,4	8,6
Former Primary School	0,1	0,1	0,5	0,4	6,9	7,4	12,5	15,5	2,8	3,3	22,8	26,8	25,3
Foreign Students	0,2	0,3	1,5	1,3	3,9	2,7	2,1	1,8	0,1	0,2	7,8	6,3	6,9
Total	6,9	6,9	22,1	21,5	35,4	38,7	40,1	32,1	4,7	5,3	100	100	100

About 1/4 of the students are under 35 years of age and almost 2/3 are under 35 years of age. There are only small differences in number between male and female students except for age groups 35-54 (more men) and for previous study groups Former Lower Sec (more women).

2 State Schools for Adults

2.1 There are two State Schools for Adults, one in northern Sweden (Härnösand) and one in southern Sweden (Norrköping). They provide two forms of study:

a) Correspondence courses
b) Correspondence courses combined with shorter in-school courses

2.2 General Terms of Admission

See page 6.

2.3 Number of students

Year	Number of students	
	Total number	Correspondence courses only
1967/68	3 149	1 000
1970/71	7 045	3 885
1973/74	7 281	5 669
1976/77	15 616	12 898
1977/78	19 353	16 206

2.4 Students in Spring Term 1978 (according to previous studies)

Previous studies corresponding to	Adult State School Courses			
	Comprehensive School Courses	Upper Secondary School Courses	Total N	%
Former primary	889	286	1 175	24,1
Former Lower Sec	214	740	954	19,8
9 year Compuls School	207	778	985	20,4
Upper Sec School	43	1 259	1 302	26,9
Foreign Students	195	219	414	8,6
Total	1 548	3 282	4 830	100

2.5 Percentage distribution of students in State Schools for Adults according to previous stadies, age and sex (1978)

Previous Studies	- 19		20-24		25-34		35-54		55-		Total		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	Tot
Post-secondary Ed	-	-	0,3	0,3	0,7	0,8	0,4	0,4	0,1	0,1	3,2	3,3	3,1
3 or 4 years Upper Secondary Ed	0,7	0,7	3,9	2,7	2,8	1,2	0,7	0,4	0,2	0,1	18,1	10,6	13,4
2 years Upper Secondary Ed	0,5	0,7	3,1	2,4	1,7	0,7	0,7	-	0,2	0,1	13,4	8,2	10,1
Former Lower Sec School	-	0,1	0,1	0,6	1,9	4,2	0,1	2,8	0,0	0,2	6,6	16,7	11,0
9 year Compulsory School	1,9	2,3	6,7	6,2	3,7	3,6	0,2	0,4	-	-	22,1	26,9	24,9
Vocational School	0,3	0,4	2,0	1,1	2,4	1,5	0,8	0,5	0,1	-	12,0	7,4	9,1
Former Primary School	0,0	0,0	0,4	0,3	5,0	3,7	4,2	3,9	0,8	0,7	22,5	18,1	19,0
Residential Adult College	-	-	-	0,1	0,1	0,3	0,1	0,1	0,1	0,0	0,7	0,9	0,8
Foreign Studies	0,2	0,3	0,9	0,8	2,1	1,7	1,2	1,1	0,2	0,2	9,8	8,6	8,7
Total	3,6	4,5	17,5	14,6	20,5	17,6	9,2	9,6	1,7	1,3	100	100	100

3 Residential Adult Colleges (Folk High Schools)

3.1 The total number of Residential Adult Colleges (RAC) is 115. About half of them are run by the municipalities and the other half by different organizations within the popular movements (30 by religious congregations, 7-8 by the Labour Movement, 4 by the Temperance Movements, 2 by Athletic Federations etc).

In general 3 main types of courses are given:

A General courses, leading to a general certificate for entrance to Higher Education
B Special courses (not exceeding 30 weeks)
C Short courses (less than 15 weeks)

3.2 General Terms of Admission to RAC

At least 18 years of age (in some cases the same courses are open to 16-18 years old). School marks from previous studies, working life experience and activities in different kinds of associations, societies and clubs. There are very few formalised regulations for admission and every college is independent in their application of the general terms for admission.

3.3 Number of students (1980)

Types of courses			
General	Special	Short	Total
7 000	7 000	200 000	214 000

4 Voluntary educational associations

The largest number of today's adult learners attend study circles organized by the local branches of Sweden's educational associations. The main associations are the following:

Adult Schools Association
Citizens' Educational Association
Educational Association of the Temperance Movement
Educational Association of the Swedish Church
Folk University
Free Churches' Education Board
National Education Asociation for the YWCA and YMCA
Salaried Employees Educational Association
Study Promotion Association
Worker's Educational Association

The study circles are mainly of the following types:

A General circles
B Special circles, mainly in the following subject areas: Behavioural Sciences, Humanities, Art, Music, Economy, Technology. Other courses e g in Swedish, Mathematics, English and Social Sciences corresponding to the Upper Department (grades 7-9) of the Compulsory School are of special interest in this connection. This latter type of courses represent about 40 % of all special courses.
C University circles as part of the extra-mural activities of the Universities.

Approx number of Students

Year	Types of circles			
	General	Special	University	Total
1967/68	-	-	-	1 215 900
1978/79	1 700 000	1 224 000	6 000	2 930 000

5 Some concluding remarks about the Swedish Educational System

Besides the four types of Adult Education mentioned earlier there are other Adult Educational Programmes representing important parts of the system, e g Labour Market Training, Staff Training in the public and private sector and Training programs sponsored by employee organizations (see further the attached Fact Sheet on Adult Education in Sweden).

In total about 2/3 of the total population over 20 years of age take part in one or another programme of Adult Education. To this should be added that all youngsters in the age group 7-16 attend the Compulsory School and about 85 % of the 16-19 years old go on directly from the Compulsory School to at least 2 years of Upper Secondary Schooling. The Upper Secondary School has since a few years ago been dimensioned for about 105-110 % of the age group 16. This means that many of those who do not enter the Upper Secondary School directly after the end of the Compulsory School start their secondary Schooling some years later.

Finally, about 25 000 students are admitted to Higher Education each year.

All in all, about 75 % of the age groups 7-24 are involved in the educational system, most of them in full time courses.

The system of Adult Education in Sweden has four main aims:

a) To give those who have had 6 or 7 years of Primary schooling an opportunity to reach the educational level of the 9 year Compulsory School in single subjects or the full course

b) To give new opportunities for Upper Secondary Education to those who for various reasons did not have that possibility or who left the Upper Secondary School without a leaving certificate

c) To open up new ways of entering Higher Education

d) To offer the widest possible opportunities to use different forms of educational activities as a part of a richer and more interesting way of spending one's leisure time and as a means to a better understanding of the society and one's own role as a citizen.

From a wide perspective one can look upon the Swedish Adult Education as a means in trying to answer the needs for recurrent education. As has been shown by the statistics a great number of people in the year groups 25-40 take part in the different Adult Education programmes.

From other points of view parts of the Adult Education in Sweden provide second chances to Higher Education as well as to Secondary Education. This is especially true about the study courses of the Municipal Adult Schools, the State Adult Schools and parts of the programmes given at the Residential Adult Colleges. The MAS and the SAS together with some courses provided by the Voluntary Educational Associations offer primary courses, which in many cases are the first steps for those who may aim at Higher Education.

III THE SYSTEM OF ECONOMIC STUDY ASSISTANCE

1 Introduction

The Swedish system of economic study assistance is part of the general social programme to improve the socio-economic situation of the citizen, especially the possibilities for different kinds of studies.

All Acts of Parliament since 1973 concerning economic study assistance have now been assembled into one single statute. A special National Board, the Central Study Assistance Committee, administrates the system, assisted by 6 regional Study Assistance Boards, one in each of the 6 regions for Higher Education. In each county there is a Board of Adult Education, also involved in the administration of the study assistance. At the local level the Local School Boards handle some parts of the system.

2 Some main types of study assistance

2.1 Study grants

All students in the Upper Secondary School or other courses of study at secondary level from 16 to 20 years of age get a study grant of 208 Sw Crs a month irrespective of the parents' income.

In 1978/79 about 205 000 students got this study grant. In addition to the general study grant the students' daily travelling cost is subsidized according to a scale starting at a travelling distance of 6 km and 130 Sw Crs a month. Students at the State Adult Schools get all of their travelling costs paid through the study assistance system. In case the students have to live away from home another grant of 285 Sw Crs a month can be added.

In case of special need due to the economic status of his family the student also can apply for increments to the general grants (max 450 Sw Crs a month).

Finally students can get a study assistance loan.

2.2 Study assistance

Study assistance is open to those who have entered Higher Education or are 20 years of age and are studying at secondary level. (Above 45 years of age the study assistance is dependent on one's previous education/training and on the length of the new studies.)

The study assistance consists of two parts, one is a grant and the other part is to be paid back. When deciding the amount of the study assistance the length of the academic year and the economic situation of the student are taken into consideration. The maximum for full time studies is 2 163 Sw Crs a month (242 as a grant and 1 921 as a loan). If the student has children another 384 Sw Crs a month may be added to the loan.

In 1978/79 143 000 students got study assistance, of whom 126 000 also used the loan part of the system.

2.3 The Special Adult Study Assistance

2.3.1 A special grant goes to employees with insufficient education/training in case they have to leave their jobs without payment. The possibilities to get this grant are restricted depending on previous education, possibilities to study in one's leisure time or on one's economic obligations to one's family.

The total sum of these grants in 1978/79 was 300 M Sw Crs.

2.3.2 Adults studying in the 9 year Compulsory School, in the Residential Adult Colleges or in the Upper Secondary School can get a grant of 3 750 Sw Crs a month (taxable). In 1978/79 40 000 students applied for this grant and 25 000 got it.

2.3.3 Adults attending shorter courses at Residential Adult Colleges can get a subsidy of 150 Sw Crs a day for maximum 12 days.

In 1978/79 77 000 students got these subsidies.

2.3.4 Adults who attend study circles in Swedish, English, Mathematics, Social Sciences (see page 10), courses in tradeunion questions, home language for emigrants or special courses for handicapped can get a study assistance of 30 Sw Crs (taxable) an hour during maximum 90 hours per academic year.

In 1978/79 43 000 adults got this kind of study assistance.

3 Subsidies to recruiting activities of adult education

Employees' associations may get subsidies for their recruitment of employees or employers to studies.